

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00
DOTE-00 EB-08 FMC-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 CG-00 DLOS-09
OES-07 AID-05 CEQ-01 SOE-02 EPA-01 L-03 NSF-01
NSC-05 PM-05 USIA-06 SS-15 SP-02 DOE-11 INT-05
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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4517
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PORG, AORG, EWWT, IMCO, PO
SUBJECT: LONDON PLENIPOTENTIARY CONFERENCE ON TANKER SAFETY AND
POLLUTION PREVENTION, FEB 6-17

REF: STATE 296444

1. SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH GOP FINDS U.S. PROPOSALS TECHNICALLY SOUND,
ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF U.S. PACKAGE CAUSE GOP TO LEAN
IN FAVOR OF SWEDISH POSITION. ACTION REQUESTED: SEE PARA 7.
END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF DISCUSSED SUBJECT CONFERENCE JAN 24 WITH MFA DIRECTOR
FOR MULTILATERAL ECON AFFAIRS, BARREIROS MARTINS, AND STAFFER,
PEREIRA GUIMARAES. GOP IS KEENLY INTERESTED IN CONFERENCE
AND PLANS SEND THREE-MAN DELEGATION.

3. GOP VIEWS: BOTH MARTINS AND GUIMARAES FEEL U.S. PROPOSALS
ARE WELL CONCEIVED TECHNICALLY AND FROM THAT PERSPECTIVE SUPERIOR
TO PROPOSALS OF, E.G. SWEDEN AND UK. NEVERTHELESS, GOP FEELS THAT
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ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF U.S. PACKAGE ARE SO ONEROUS
AS TO RENDER PROPOSALS UNATTRACTIVE TO MANY COUNTRIES.
FURTHERMORE, U.S. PROPOSALS THAT ENTAIL INSTALLATION OF TECHNOLOGICALLY
ADVANCED GEAR COULD BE DIFFICULT FOR LESS SOPHISTICATED COUNTRIES TO
IMPLEMENT.

4. SWEDISH PROPOSALS, ON THE OTHER HAND, WHILE NOT AS FAR REACHING AS THOSE OF U.S., HAVE ADVANTAGE OF BEING SUBSTANTIALLY LESS COSTLY WHILE STILL BEING COMPATIBLE WITH U.S. OBJECTIVES IN LONGER TERM. GOP OPINION AT THIS TIME IS THEREFORE THAT U.S. PACKAGE IS LIKELY TO ENCOUNTER SIGNIFICANT, THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY OVERWHELMING, OPPOSITION.

5. GOP DEL: PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR IN LONDON WILL LEAD GOP DEL, WHICH WILL INCLUDE EXPERTS FROM MINISTRIES OF INDUSTRY AND TRANSPORTATION, WHO YET TO BE NAMED.

6. COMMENT: GOP, WITH INPUT FROM SOPHISTICATED PORTUGUESE NAVAL CONSTRUCTION SECTOR, HAS CARRIED OUT RUDIMENTARY COST/BENEFIT STUDY AND IS CONVINCED THAT SWEDISH PROPOSALS ARE MORE REALISTIC ON THIS BASIS. GOP ESTIMATES THAT US-PROPOSED STRUCTURAL MODIFICATIONS TO EXISTING TANKER FLEET COULD ALONE COST ABOUT \$3.5 BILLION. APPEALS TO NATIONAL SELF-INTEREST ARE NOT LIKELY EASILY TO SWAY GOP, SINCE THEIR POSITION ALREADY TAKES INTO ACCOUNT PROBABLE BENEFITS OF U.S. PACKAGE TO UNDEREMPLOYED PORTUGUESE SHIPYARDS. ALSO, WHILE GOP RECOGNIZES NEED TO REDUCE INCIDENCE AND THREAT OF MARINE POLLUTION, ECOLOGICA CONSIDERATIONS APPARENTLY DO NOT OUTWEIGH ECONOMIC ONES IN THEIR CALCULATIONS. IN SHORT, WHILE GOP WILL PROBABLY GO TO LONDON WITH RELATIVELY OPEN MIND, THEY ARE NOT LIKELY TO SUPPORT U.S. PROPOSALS UNLESS CONVINCED OF THEIR MERITS ON COST/BENEFIT BASIS.

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7. ACTION REQUESTED: (A) ANY DATA ON FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF U.S. PROPOSALS THAT WOULD SUPPORT U.S. CASE WOULD BE APPRECIATED BY NLT FEB 1 IN ORDER THAT WE MAY MAKE FURTHER APPROACH TO MFA PRIOR TO GOP DEL'S DEPARTURE. (FYI/MFA HAS JUST RECEIVED COPY OF OECD REPORT THIS SUBJECT). (B) COPIES OF U.S. DOMESTIC LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS ON MARINE POLLUTION, PARTICULARLY AS THEY APPLY TO FOREIGN FLAG CARRIERS, WOULD ALSO BE APPRECIATED (FYI: ACCORDING TO GUIMARAES, A PORTUGUESE VESSEL WHICH RECENTLY CALLED AT A U.S. PORT WAS OBLIGED BY U.S. AUTHORITIES TO UNDERGO REFITTING PRIOR TO DEPARTURE FROM U.S. GOP APPARENTLY DOES NOTMMVX YET HAVE DETAILS OF MOST RECENT U.S. LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THIS ACTIVITY.)
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition History: n/a
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